DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 186 558 UD 020 558

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TITLE Community School District 20K, Reading Success, Title I -5071-91624, Impact Aid 5071-98722. Final Evaluation Report, 1978-79.
INSTITUTION Community School District 20, Brooklyn, N.Y.
PUB DATE [79]
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Achievement Gains; Diagnostic Teaching; Elementary Education; Junior High Schools; Pretests Posttests; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *Reading Achievement; Remedial Instruction; *Remedial Programs; *Remedial Reading
IDENTIFIERS *Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I; *Impact Aid; New York (Brooklyn)

ABSTRACT

The Program for Reading Success was designed to improve the reading skills for first through ninth graders identified as being in need of remediation. Funding was supplied by Title I and Impact Aid. The program served 1,320 students and employed 22 teachers. Teachers gave individualized and small group instruction based on an intensive diagnostic program designed to isolate specific reading disabilities. The program was supplementary to regular reading programs. Inservice training sessions were provided for teachers. The Stanford Early School Achievement Test and the Stanford Achievement Test were used as pre and post test measurement tools. Data indicated a mean overall growth in reading grade equivalent scores of 13 months for first through third graders and 13.7 months for second through ninth grade Title I students. Reading Success Impact Aid students gained a mean of 12.3 months in reading achievement. On the basis of these data, it was asserted that the Reading Success Program helped to reduce the gap between Title I students and their non Title I peers. (MK)

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

1978-79

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT20K

READING SUCCESS

TITLE I- 5071-91624

IMPACT AID 5071-98722

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UD020558

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Introduction

The Reading Success and Reading Success Impact Aid program can be as a single entity since the programs are identical with one one exception, namely, the source of funding.

I have observed each of the Title I reading teachers in the district who have participated in the Program For Reading Success and the Program For Reading Success-Impact Aid several times. Although some of the policies and practices in the reading programs in the different schools vary to some extent, I feel that one can, in capsule fashion, present a reasonably adequate description of the Title I Program For Reading Success in District # 20. I will attempt to describe the program and my reactions to, and analysis of the program under three major foci, namely, Process Evaluation, Summative Evaluation, Comments and Recommendations. The overall outline of the evaluation report will be as follows:

I. Process Evaluation
   1. Proposal Description
   2. Teacher and Student Assignments
   3. Sessions for Teachers
   4. Sessions for Students
   5. Criteria for Program Admission for Students
   6. Basis for Groups
   7. Program
   8. In-Service Program and Techmical Services
   9. Testing Program
   10. Space, Supplies, and Equipment
   11. Design and Evaluation

II. Summative Evaluation

III. Recommendations

I. Process Evaluation

1. Proposal Description

The Program For Reading Success was designed to improve the reading skills of first through ninth grade students who resided in Title I attendance areas, "who have been indentified as being in need of remediation." Initially, it was anticipated that this program would service approximately 1140 pupils located in six elementary and two junior high schools. Six reading teachers were to be assigned to the elementary school manifesting the greatest degree of reading retardation among the students. Two reading teachers were to be assigned to each of two elementary schools and the two other elementary schools in the program were to be assigned one teacher each. At the junior high school level, one of the schools was assigned three teachers and one school was assigned two teachers. However, Impact Aid Funds enabled the district to assign three additional reading teachers to another junior high school. Consequently, the combined programs were to comprise twenty-two teachers servicing 1320 pupils in nine schools.

The Reading Success Program this year provided paraprofessionals for each of the elementary school reading classrooms.[x] No paraprofessionals were assigned at the junior high school level.

The teachers were to initiate diagnostic and prescriptive procedures in reading which would reverse the cycle of failure experienced by the students. During the reading periods, the teachers

[x] It should be pointed out that the salaries of the paraprofessionals assigned to P.S. 180 and P.S. 192 were paid by Impact Aid funds whereas the salaries of the paraprofessionals in the other elementary schools were paid by the regular Title I funds.

were to give individualized and small group instruction based upon an intensive disagnostic testing program designed to isolate specific reading disabilities for the purpose of prescriptive remediation. Emphasis was to be placed on a sequential program stressing phonetic and structural skills, and using materials appropriate to the group in terms of content, interest, and grade level. The program was also to emphasize language experience activities and guided independent use of reading.

The Reading Success Program was to be in addition to and not in place of the regular reading program. Comprehensive records were to be kept in individual folders. The folders were to contain pertinent information as to the needs and progress of each child.

The coordinator was to provide in-service training sessions for the reading teachers throughout the year by means of monthly meetings. These in-service sessions were to focus on training teachers to become more effective in analyzing their instructional methods and materials and adapting them to indicated needs of their students. In addition, the coordinator was to insure that each school had the necessary supplies and equipment for conducting a diagnostic-prescriptive program.

2. Teacher and Student Assignments

The twenty-two Reading Success and Reading Success-Impact Aid teachers were assigned to the schools exactly as was described in in the proposals. The combined programs called for servicing 1320 (Approximately 1140 Reading Success and 180 Reading Success-Impact Aid students) first thru ninth grade students, and the schools closely adhered to these numbers.

3. Sessions for Teachers

The fourteen elementary school reading teachers distributed throughout six schools conduct five daily class sessions of between 40 and 45 minutes. The eight junior high school reading teachers located in three junior high schools have programs which vary from day to day, but they each conduct 25 instructional periods in reading per week. All junior high periods are conducted for approximately 40 minutes.

4. Sessions for Students

The number of weekly sessions for students in the Reading Success Program does not vary from school to school. Each child participated in the program five times a week. The size of the class groups with which the reading teachers worked varied. The class group size ranges from 8 to 15 with the majority of classes having a range of 10 to 13.

5. Criteria for Program Admission for Students

In addition to the usual requirements of economic disadvantagement, educational attainment criteria were included as pre-requisites for admission to the program. The proposal indicated that the program would service first through ninth graders. The proposal also stated that the program would focus on students "who have been identified as being in need of remediation." Analysis of the pre test scores indicated that the vast majority of the students in the program were functioning well below grade level in reading, and that the program was servicing first through ninth grade students.

6. Basis for Groups

In virtually all of the participating schools, the two major

factors in determining student assignment to a particular group were regular class assignment and perceived level of functioning in reading. At the elementary school level, the reading teachers often formed a group from the same one or two homeroom classes thereby reducing interference with the regular program (some children missing gym, etc.). At the junior high school level each group represented a fraction of some high exponent class.

7. Program

The basic underlying thrust throughout the program is emphasis on a diagnostic-prescriptive approach to reading instruction. Each teacher I observed had completed a comprehensive and sophisticated diagnosis of each child's reading difficulty. The prescriptive learning activities for thepupils were virtually all based on diagnosed need and were primarily individualized in character. The program was highly sequential and stressed phonetic and structural skills. In the vast majority of cases the materials employed in the learning activities were appropriate to the individuals or small groups being instructed in terms of content, interest and level. Excellent use was made of multy-sensory materials. Although language experience activities were part of the program, they were not employed extensively, particularly at the elementary school level. Guided independent use of reading was not prominently featured during my observations. Nevertheless, the diagnostic-prescriptive approach to reading which I observed in this program was of a very high caliber. The teachers utilized positive reinforcement extensively and, in general, enjoyed excellent rapport and control.

The teachers had prepared their lessons well, and the rooms, with but one or two exceptions at the junior high school level, were

attractively decorated.

Pupil progress was monitored continually and the teachers kept an extensive folder for each student containing diagnostic work-ups, prescriptive activities, test data and materials employed in carrying out prescriptive activities.

Virtually all of the paraprofessionals working with the elementary school teachers were experienced and highly competent practitioners who worked harmoniously with the reading specialists. They assisted in the various instructional and clerical routines and procedures in a most commendable manner.

All of the schools were offering the Reading Success Program as a supplement to and not as a substitute for regular classroom reading instruction.

8. In-Service Program and Technical Assistance

The reading coordinator conducted joint monthly meetings for the Reading Success and Optional Assignment Reading Teachers. The meetings were to focus on the diagnostic-prescriptive approach to reading instruction and program coordination. A listing of the meetings conducted is summarized in Appendix A.

In addition, the reading coordinator made periodic visits to the schools to assist the teachers, particularly teachers new to the program, in utilizing materials and techniques more effectively. The feedback from the teachers concerning this assistance provided by the coordinator has been extremely favorable.

9. Testing Program

The Stanford Reading Test was to be administered on a pre-post test basis in October, 1978 and May, 1979 for all students who were

enrolled in the program in September.

All of the teachers used a combination of other tests in addition to those mentioned above in order to arrive at a more precise diagnosis. A good number of the teachers relied heavily on the Botel Inventory, Gilmore Oral Reading, The Indiana, the Slosson Oral Reading and informal tests.

10. Space, Supplies, and Equipment

At the elementary school level with but one glaring exception all of the reading classrooms are full-sized and attratively decorated. In one elementary school, one of the reading teachers used the library in the morning and a kindergarten in the afternoon. During the morning session I observed children interrupting the class with notes from their teachers asking for a particular book. In the afternoon, the smell of some rancid food in the kindergarten detracted from the lesson. Ironically, I passed by a vacant classroom which seemed to be used solely for housing a few textbooks. At the junior high school level, two of the reading classrooms in one of the schools are less than half the size of the regular classroom and one of these was L-shaped as well. Since there are sometimes 12 - 15 students and a teacher in these rooms, they are not only crowded but a possible source of disruption. Furthermore, the L-shaped room virtually precluded utilizing certain audio-visual materials.

The supplies and equipment with which the teachers work vary from adequate to outstanding. In general, the elementary classrooms contain more up-to-date and appropriate materials than do the junior high school classrooms.

II. Design and Evaluation

The proposal calls for a pre test, post test design employing the Stanford Reading Test. Although the Stanford Achievement Test was employed exclusively from the fourth grade on, many teachers used the Stanford Early School Achievement Test in Grades one through three.

II. Summative Evaluation

The data with respect to program effectiveness is presented in three separate tables. Table 1 is concerned with the analysis of the data from the Stanford Early School Achievement Test (SESAT). Since pre test scores on SESAT can and did go below a grade equivalent of 1.1, it was impossible to do a regression analysis on the data. Consequently, Table 1 merely compares pre and post test scores.

Tables 2 and 3 are concerned with the analysis of the data from the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). Table 2 presents an analysis of the data concerning the Reading Success students and Table 3 presents an analysis of the data concerning the Reading Success Impact Aid students. In both of these Tables, not only were comparisons made between pre and post tests, but also between anticipated[x] mean post scores in reading and actual mean post test scores in reading.

[x] Anticipated mean scores are derived by means of the Bond-Singer historical regression formula. These anticipated mean scores are based on the students' achievement prior to entrance into the program.

Analysis of the data in Table 1 indicated that in the seven month period between the pre and post test administration of the Stanford Early School Achievement Test, the mean overall growth in grade equivalent scores in reading was over one year and one month (11.4[X]). The mean difference in pre/post test growth varied in the grades from a low of 8.1 months at the third grade level to a high of 14.9 months at the first grade level. At no grade level did the students in the program register less than a month's growth in reading for every month in the program. Consequently, it is safe to assert that on the basis of these test results the Reading Success Program has helped to reduce the gap between these Title I students and their non Title I peers.

Analysis of the data in Table 2 indicated that in the seven month period between the pre test and post test administration of the Stanford Achievement Test, the mean overall growth in grade equivalent scores in reading for the Reading Success students was over thirteen and one half months (13.7). The mean difference in pre/post test growth varied in the grades from a low of 9.9 months at the fifth grade level to a high of approximately one year and nine months at the eighth grade level.

Further analysis of the data in Table 2 revealed that the overall mean difference between the predicted and actual post test reading scores was 9.7 months (13.7 - 4.0), and that the ratio of actual to predicted growth was 3.43. The ratio of actual to predicted post test mean scores varied in the grades from 2.41 at the fifth grade level to 4.85 at the eighth grade level. The overall significant mean difference of 9.3 months favoring the actual over the predicted post test scores clearly indicated

[X] It must be remembered that the school year comprises 10 months.

TABLE 1

Achievement Growth Rate (In Grade Equivalents) in Reading of the Reading Success Students in 1978-79 (October, 1978-May, 1979) on the Stanford Early School Achievement Test

Grade	n	Pre-test Mean	Act. Post Test Mean	Mean Diff. in Months Pre to Act. Post Test	t	P
1	65	1.07	2.56	14.9	11.14	.01
2	98	1.45	2.49	10.4	10.03	.01
3	37	2.12	2.93	8.1	6.87	.01
TOTAL	200	1.45	2.59	11.4	13.31	.01

TABLE 2

Achievement Growth Rate (In Grade Equivalents) in Reading of the Reading Success Students in 1978-79 (October, 1978 - May, 1979) on the Stanford Achievement Test

Grade	n	Pre-test Mean	Pred. Post Test Mean	Act. Post Test Mean	Mean Diff. in Months Pre to Act. Post Test	Mean Diff. in Months Pre. to Pred. Post Test	Ratio Act. Diff. to Pred. Diff.	t	P
2	66	1.76	2.24	3.41	16.5	4.8	3.44	6.01	.01
3	121	2.02	2.36	3.24	12.2	3.4	3.59	7.13	.01
4	107	2.90	3.33	4.00	11.0	4.3	2.56	5.98	.01
5	92	3.43	3.84	4.42	9.9	4.1	2.41	4.99	.01
6	69	3.98	4.39	5.02	10.4	4.1	2.54	4.93	.01
7	102	4.64	5.06	6.23	15.9	4.2	3.79	8.04	.01
8	109	5.08	5.48	7.02	19.4	4.0	4.85	9.17	.01
9	31	4.99	5.33	6.62	16.3	3.4	4.79	6.52	.01
TOTAL	697	3.51	3.91	4.88	13.7	4.0	3.43	10.03	.01

that significant gains, beyond those which would have been attained in the absence of program participation, were made.

Furthermore, not only did this program prevent the program participants from falling further behind their non Title I peers, but also it substantially reduced the gap between the two groups. Overall, the students registered almost two months growth in reading for every month in the program, and at no grade level did the students register less than a month's growth in reading for every month in the program.

Analysis of the data in Table 3 indicated that in the seven month period between the pre and post test administration of the Stanford Achievement Test, the mean overall growth in grade equivalent scores in reading for the Reading Success Impact Aid students was over one year and two months (12.3). The mean difference in pre/post test growth varied in the grades from a low of 11.4 months at the seventh grade level to a high of 13.5 months at the sixth grade level.

Further analysis of the data in Table 3 revealed that the overall mean difference between the predicted and actual post test reading scores was 8.6 months (12.3 - 3.7), and that the ratio of actual to predicted growth was 3.32. The ratio of actual to predicted post test mean scores varied in the grades from 2.92 at the seventh grade level to 3.86 at the sixth grade level. The overall significant mean difference of 8.6 months favoring the actual over the predicted post test scores clearly indicated program effectiveness. The Impact Aid data was also similar to the Reading Success data in that at no grade level did the students fail to register at least a year's growth in reading in the seven month period between pre and post testing.

TABLE 3

Achievement Growth Rate (In Grade Equivalents) in Reading of Impact Aid Students in 1978-79 (October, 1978 - May, 1979) on the Stanford Achievement Test

Grade	n	Pre-test Mean	Pred. Post Test Mean	Act Post Test Mean	Mean Diff. In Months Pre to Act. Post Test	Mean Diff. In Months Pre to Pred. Post Test	Ratio Act. Diff. to Pred. Diff.	t	P
6	40	3.54	3.89	4.89	13.5	3.5	3.86	8.73	.01
7	55	4.39	4.78	5.53	11.4	3.9	2.92	6.84	.01
8	71	4.73	5.10	5.97	12.4	3.7	3.35	7.26	.01
TOTAL	166	4.33	4.70	5.56	12.3	3.7	3.32	10.33	.01

III. Recommendations

1. Wherever feasible, there should be a full size classroom for reading instruction. Assigning reading teachers for half a day in the library and half a day in a kindergarten when there are vacant classrooms is completely unwarranted.

2. In view of the quality of this program, it is recommended that this program be recycled. Certainly, the findings in these programs are at variance of the findings of the Rand Corporation study which questioned the efficacy of pull out programs. It might be worthwhile for the Rand people to visit the Reading Success and Reading Success Impact Aid Programs in District 20 in order to observe successful pull out programs in action.

APPENDIX A

Month	Subject
September, 1978	Orientation and Implementation of Program Goals and Objectives, Pre-Test Administration and Pupil Selection
October, 1978	Initial Problems Encountered, Diagnosis and Materials Needed
November, 1978	Test Results (Pre-Testing)
December, 1978	Diagnostic, Prescriptive Approaches
January, 1979	Use of Materials for Achieving Instructional and Program Objectives
February, 1979	Workshops and Demonstrations of Teacher-Developed Materials
March, 1979	Small Group and Individual Instructional Techniques and Methods-Demonstration
April, 1979	Parental Involvement and Communication with Tax Levy Staff
May, 1979	Post-Test Administration and Review of Program Implementation
June, 1979	Overview and Recommendations of Program for Following Year